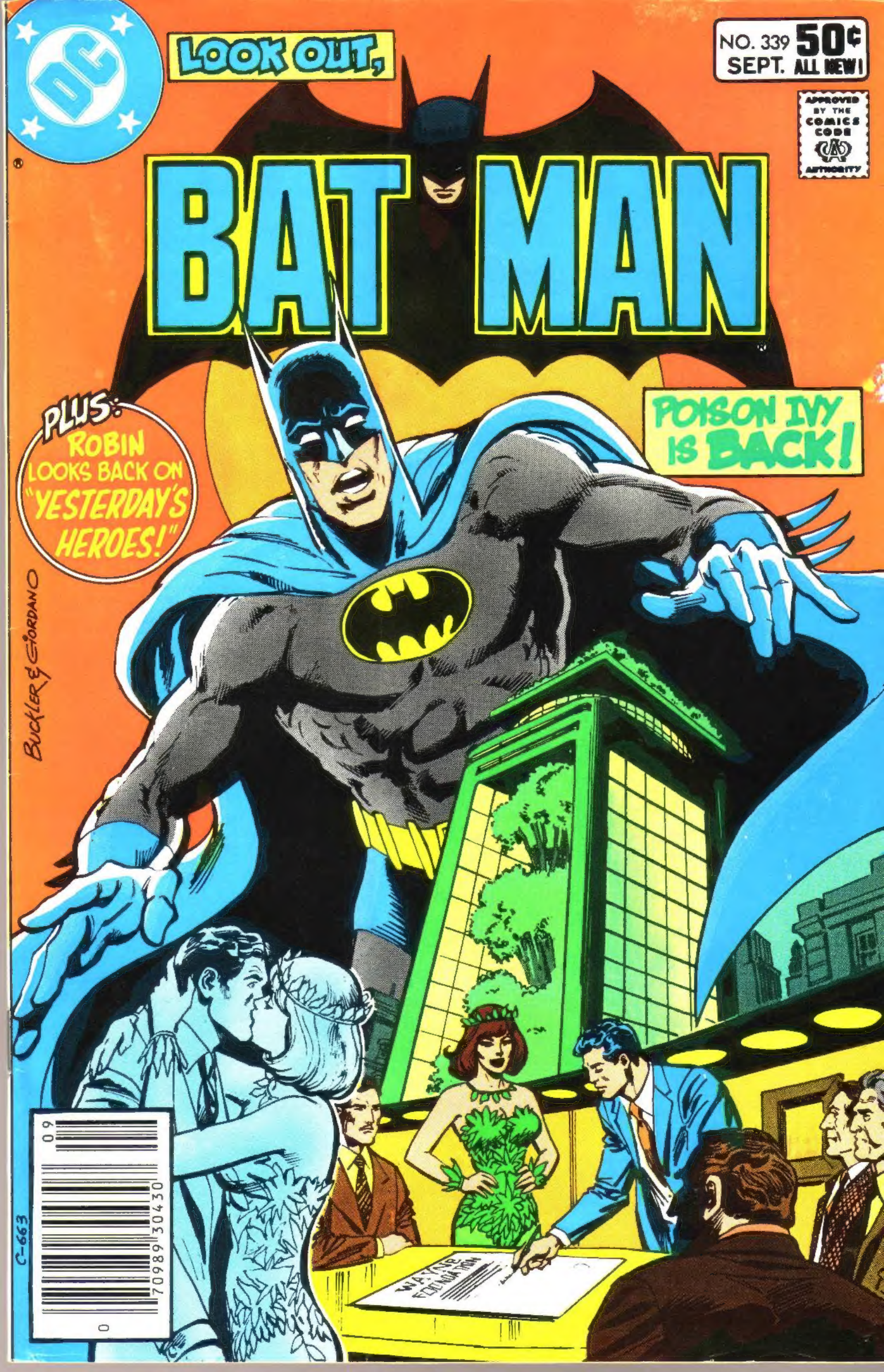
LOOK OUT,
NO. 339 50¢
SEPT. ALL NEW!
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
BAT MAN
PLUS: ROBIN LOOKS BACK ON "YESTERDAY'S HEROES!"
POISON IVY IS BACK!
BUCKLER & GIORDANO
WAYNE FOUNDATION
C-663
0 70989 30430

Unleash a Darda Demon.™

And leave the others in the dust.

Wind up Darda's powerful Mega Motor™ with a push. Unleash. The car takes off with startling speed. Zipping. Zooming. Careening recklessly.

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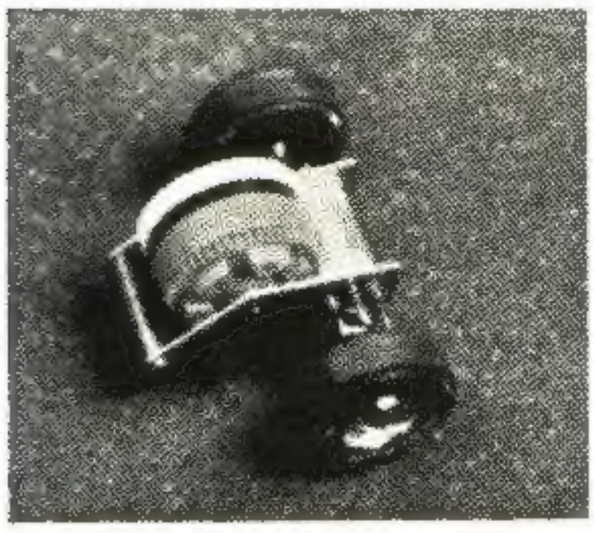
Because Darda's Mega Motor is the most powerful motor of its kind. Operating without batteries, electricity or keys.



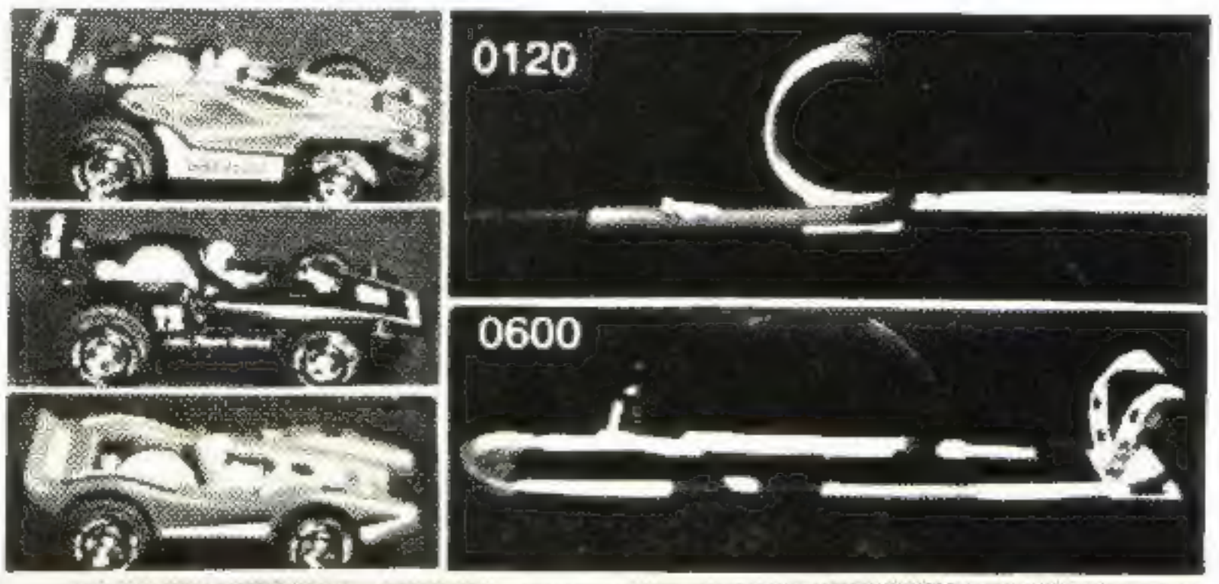
In fact, a Darda Demon reaches a speed of 520 MPH (in scale) and will run 75 feet on one wind.

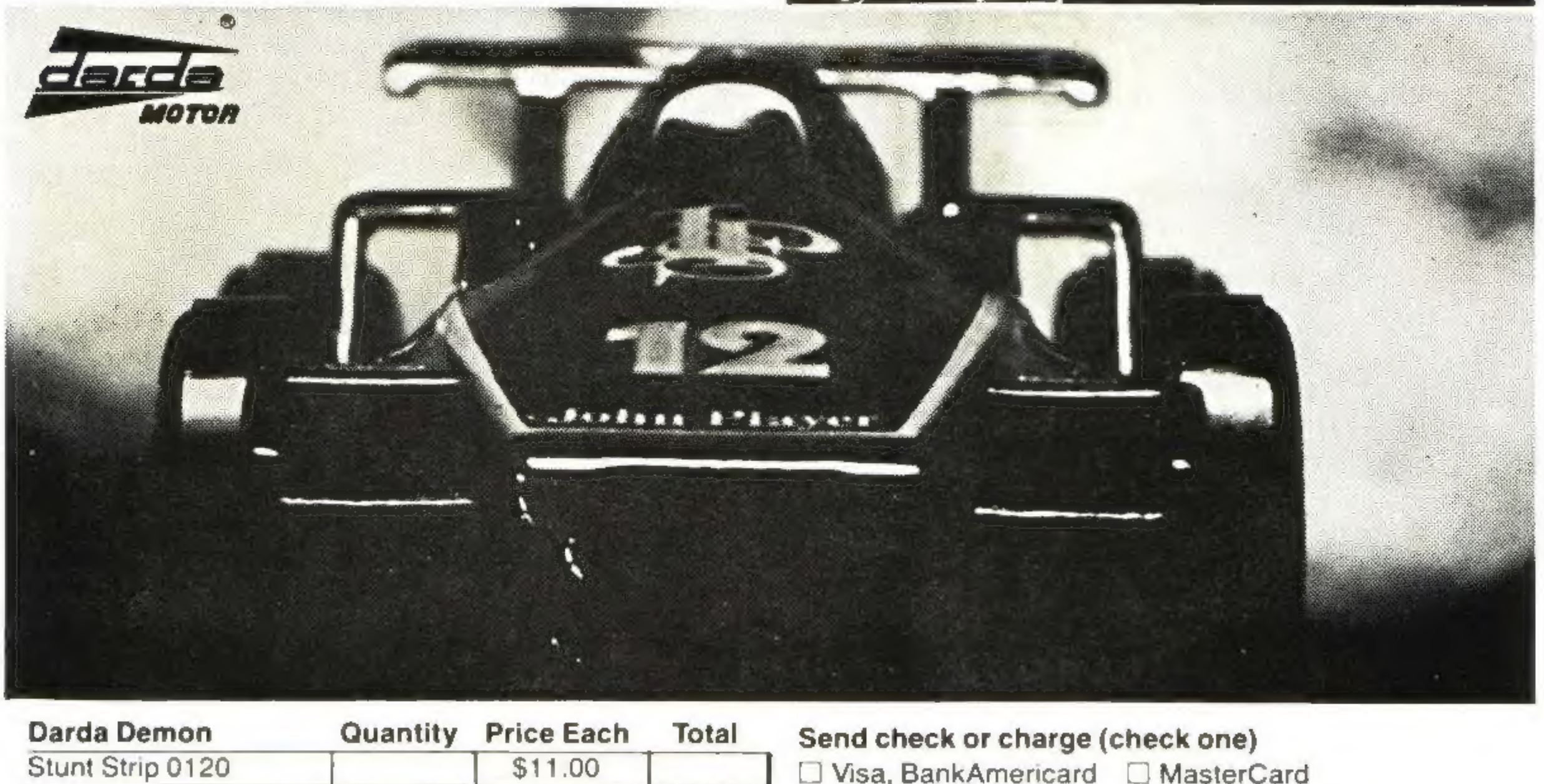
Darda Demons come in 14 different models. All made of tough die-cast zinc alloy.

All painted in bright enamel. Some with metal flake finish.

Try one. Like the Darda Demon Daredevil Leap.™ Watch it climb. Leap. Fly upside down, defying gravity, to land right side up.

Race a Darda Demon on the track or across the floor. Either way, you'll leave the others in the dust.





Darda Demon	Quantity	Price Each	Total
Stunt Strip 0120		$11.00	
Corkscrew loop 0140		$25.00	
Daredevil leap 0600		$45.00	
Blizzard 1002		$ 5.00	
Tornado 1001		$ 5.00	
Formula I 1004		$ 5.00	
Stratos 1005		$ 5.00	
Buggy 1009		$ 5.00	
Sub total			$
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Total Enclosed			$

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Darda Toy Company, 19 Lexington Avenue, East Brunswick, NJ 08816

NIGHT PEOPLE, DAY PEOPLE:

ACCORDING TO THOSE WHO STUDY SUCH THINGS, THE HUMAN RACE IS NEATLY DIVIDED INTO **HALVES:** PEOPLE WHO LIVE BY NIGHT, AND PEOPLE WHO LIVE BY DAY.

THE TRUTH, AS ALWAYS, IS SUBTLER: FOR WHAT OF THOSE WHOSE LIVES DEFY NEAT DIVISION, WHO WALK THE TWILIGHT TIGHTROPE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS, DAY AND NIGHT?

ONE SUCH WALKER OF TIGHTROPE IS THE DARKNIGHT DETECTIVE KNOWN AS...

BATMAN®

CREATED BY BOB KANE

"A SWEET KISS of POISON..."

GERRY CONWAY writer • IRV NOVICK & STEVE MITCHELL artists • BEN ODA letterer • ADRIENNE ROY colorist • DICK GIORDANO editor

BATMAN, (USPS 045-340), Vol. 42, No. 339, September, 1981. Published monthly by DC COMICS INC., 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10019. Second Class Postage paid at New York, N.Y. and Additional Mailing Offices. Copyright © 1981 by DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. No actual persons, living or dead, are intended or should be inferred. Printed in U.S.A.

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ANOTHER LONG NIGHT FILLED WITH FRUSTRATIONS.

I KNOW SOMETHING'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN IN GOTHAM -- THERE ARE RUMORS OF A MAJOR CRIME IN PREPARATION--

--BUT NO MATTER HOW MANY OF MY STOOLIE STRING I ROUST, I CAN'T PIN DOWN ANYTHING DEFINITE.

I'LL BE GLAD TO GET HOME.

WHAT I NEED IS A HOT SHOWER, AND -- EH?

REFLECTED SUNLIGHT-- BLINDING ME!

MY GOD, I'M GOING TO MISS THE ROOF!

THAT WAS CLOSE--

--CLOSER THAN I'VE BEEN IN A LONG TIME!

ALFRED, DID YOU SEE--?

I DID, SIR.

HE HAS BARELY A SECOND TO REACT.

HE ALMOST DOESN'T MAKE IT.

TUMMMP

IF I MAY VENTURE AN OPINION, SIR--

--YOU'VE BEEN WORKING YOURSELF TOO *HARD*. EVER SINCE YOU RETURNED FROM *ALASKA*,* YOU'VE BEEN SPENDING YOUR *NIGHTS* CANVASSING THE STREETS AS *THE BATMAN*--

*SEE LAST MONTH'S *DETECTIVE* FOR DETAILS. --DICK

--AND YOUR *DAYS* TRYING TO CATCH UP WITH *FOUNDATION* BUSINESS AS *BRUCE WAYNE*!

THERE *IS* THE OLD SAYING ABOUT THE *CANDLE* TO CONSIDER, SIR.

YOU THINK I'VE BEEN "BURNING FROM *BOTH ENDS*," ALFRED?

WELL, PERHAPS YOU'RE *RIGHT*. THE THOUGHT'S CROSSED MY MIND, TOO.

STILL-- WHAT *ELSE* CAN I DO?

BRUCE WAYNE IS A PROMINENT BUSINESS LEADER. THE DAYS WHEN I COULD HIDE BEHIND MY REPUTATION AS A NE'ER-DO-WELL *PLAYBOY* MAY BE GONE FOREVER.

YAWN!

SOMETIMES I THINK IT WAS A *MISTAKE* TO CHANGE MY IMAGE AS BRUCE WAYNE.

I'VE GAINED *RESPECT* ...BUT I'VE LOST *MOBILITY*.

LORD, LOOK AT THE *TIME*. I HAVE A 9:00 O'CLOCK BOARD MEETING DOWNSTAIRS IN THE *WAYNE FOUNDATION* OFFICE.

DOESN'T GIVE ME MUCH TIME TO *SLEEP*, DOES IT?

I'LL CALL YOU AT 8:45, MASTER BRUCE.

YAWN! BUT WHO SHALL *WAKE* THE *WAKER*?

THERE, THERE, PENNYWORTH, *BUCKLE UP*.

IF *HE* CAN LIVE THIS WAY... *YAWN*!... THEN JOLLY-WELL, SO CAN *YOU*!

TIK TIK TIK

5:14

KLIK KLIK KLIK

9:15

... YOUR OPINION, MR. WAYNE.

MR. WAYNE?

I WANT TO KNOW IF YOU THINK IT'S WISE TO SELL CONSOLIDATED TECHNOLOGIES NOW, OR WAIT UNTIL THEIR STOCK SPLITS?

MR. WAYNE, ARE YOU LISTENING?

BRUCE, FOR GOD'S SAKE, ANSWER THE MAN!

COREY WANTS TO KNOW WHETHER TO SELL C-TECH OR HOLD FOR A SPLIT!

MR. COREY, GENTLEMEN, I OWE YOU ALL AN APOLOGY.

I'M NOT AT MY BEST THIS MORNING. PERHAPS WE SHOULD ADJOURN THE BOARD MEETING UNTIL TOMORROW.

VERY WELL, SIR. UNTIL TOMORROW.

...BRUCE, YOU KNOW I'D NEVER PRY INTO YOUR PERSONAL AFFAIRS...

...SO IF I'M OUT OF LINE ON THIS, TELL ME.

ARE YOU ILL?

EH? W-WHAT?

SORRY, LUCIUS, I MUST HAVE DOZED OFF.

DID YOU SAY SOMETHING?

I ASKED IF YOU WERE SICK, BRUCE... BUT NOW I THINK YOU'RE JUST DOG TIRED!

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU TOOK A VACATION?

I DON'T TAKE VACATIONS, LUCIUS.

YOU'RE MY ASSISTANT... YOU KNOW THAT.

WHAT I KNOW IS WHAT I SEE... AND I SEE A MAN VERGING ON EXHAUSTION...

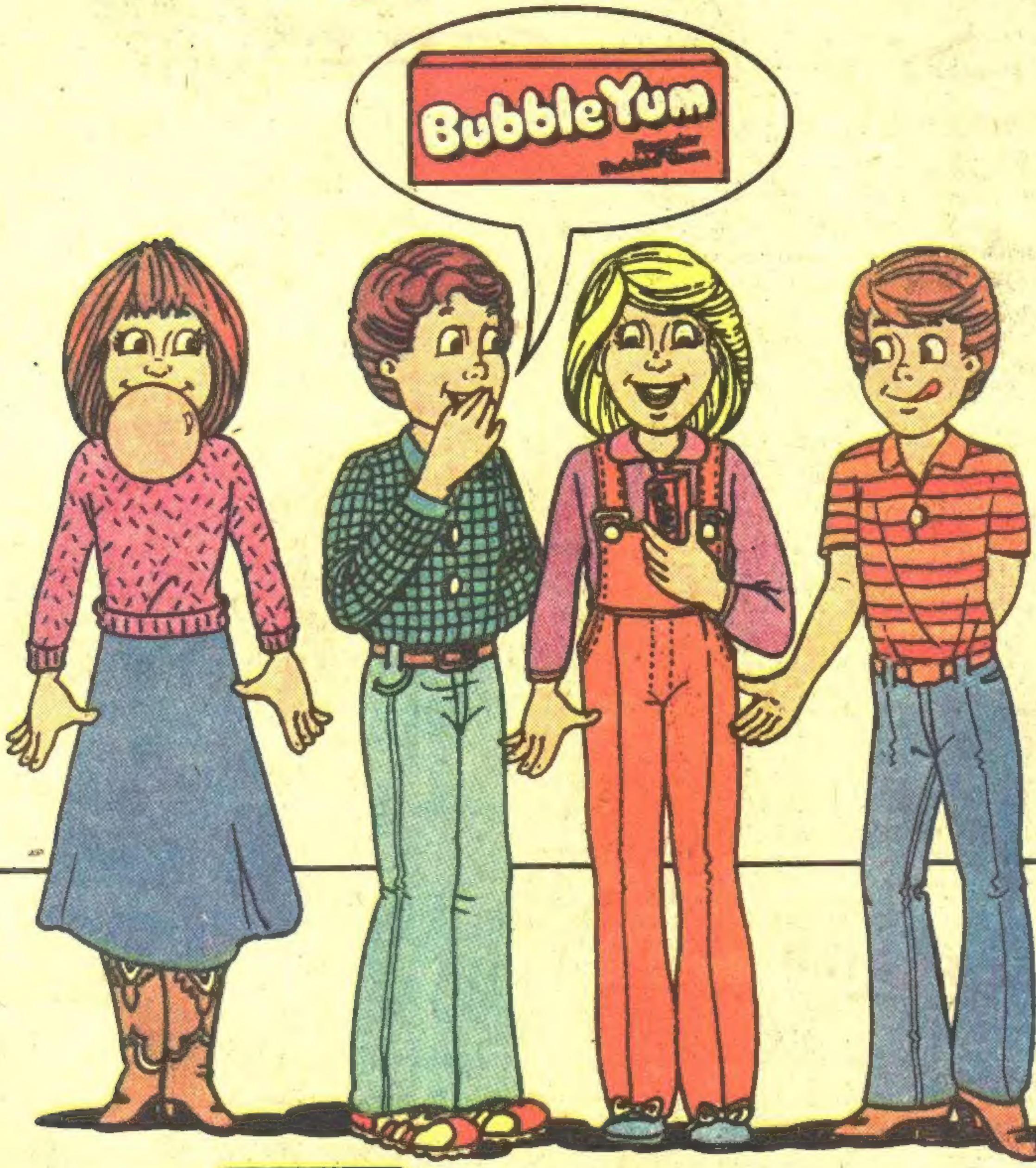
BACK OFF FROM ALL THIS, BRUCE. TAKE A MONTH, TAKE TWO MONTHS, AND GET A REST.

I WISH I COULD, LUCIUS.

BUT, I'M AFRAID THAT'S JUST IMPOSSIBLE.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 46 FOLLOWING

Bubble Yum's got the number yum taste. Pass it on.



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It's got great big bubbles and the flavor lasts a long, long, looong time. Pass it on!

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GRIT Will Help You Start Your Own Business

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TEEN TITANS BY GEORGE PEREZ

MENTION THIS AD.

ONE PER PERSON
OFFER GOOD
UNTIL SEPT. 15, 1981

WE ALSO BUY!

MISSED AN ISSUE ON THE STANDS? ALL OF THESE STORES STOCK OLD COMICS AND JUST MAY HAVE THAT ELUSIVE ISSUE YOU'RE LOOKING FOR.

This advertisement brought to you by THE FUNNY PAGES, Berkeley, California.

THE EMPIRE CLUB: AN EXCLUSIVE PRIVATE ESTABLISHMENT WHOSE MEMBERS INCLUDE THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST OF GOTHAM'S CITIZENS--

--CHOSEN NOT SO MUCH FOR THEIR WEALTH, AS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY...

GOTHAM EMPIRE CLUB

HAMILTON, I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I AGREED TO HAVE LUNCH WITH YOU IN SPITE OF YOUR MAYORAL CANDIDACY.

I'M NOT ENDORSING EITHER YOU OR YOUR OPPONENT, ARTHUR REEVES.

BRUCE, WE'RE OLD FRIENDS.

WE SHARE SIMILAR IDEALS.

WE DON'T SHARE THE SAME ATTITUDE TOWARD COMMISSIONER GORDON.

BRUCE, DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY POLICE SHOOTINGS WE HAD LAST YEAR?

YOUR FRIEND GORDON IS IN CHARGE OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.

IF HE CAN'T CONTROL HIS MEN, I SAY HE GOES!

HAMILTON, I ADMIT THERE ARE PROBLEMS, BUT BLAMING GORDON IS UNFAIR, AND--UMPH!

DARLING! HOW WONDERFUL TO SEE YOU AGAIN!

OH... YOU'RE NOT RAYMOND!

HOW EMBARRASSING! PLEASE, PLEASE FORGIVE ME... I THOUGHT YOU WERE SOMEONE ELSE!

THERE'S NOTHING TO FORGIVE.

WHO ARE YOU LOOKING FOR? I CAN CALL THE MAITRE D' AND HAVE YOUR FRIEND PAGED...

NOT NECESSARY. I'LL BE MEETING HIM AT 8:00 TONIGHT AT THE AMBASSADOR THEATRE.

ADIEU, MONSIEUR.

AH, BRUCE, YOU LUCKY DOG.

POLITICIANS ONLY GET TO KISS BABIES.

HMM? OH, YES...

HILL, I JUST REALIZED -- I KNOW EVERY MEMBER OF THE EMPIRE CLUB.

AND I DON'T KNOW ONE NAMED "RAYMOND."

MAYBE HE'S A GUEST.

"MAYBE SO," SAYS BRUCE WAYNE. "BUT STILL, IT MAKES YOU WONDER..."

DID EVERYTHING GO ACCORDING TO PLAN, MISTRESS?

TAXI

NATURALLY, EVAN.

BRUCE WAYNE NEVER SUSPECTED A THING. IN FACT, THE FOOL SEEMED FLATTERED.

NEXT STOP?

THE NEXT NAME ON MY LIST, OF COURSE!

SKREEE

DO DRIVE MORE CARE-FULLY, EVAN.

I WOULDN'T WANT SOMETHING SO BANAL AS A TRAFFIC ACCIDENT TO RUIN ALL OUR EFFORTS.

SIX DOWN, COUNTING BRUCE WAYNE.

SIX TO GO...

George Corey ✓
Jerry Irvine ✓
Ted Layne ✓
Frank Erdicott ✓
James Grimes ✓
Bruce Wayne ✓
John Forbes
Fred Johnson
Ben Wilson
Gardner

... AND WHEN WE'RE DONE, POISON IVY WILL HAVE MADE CRIME HISTORY IN GOTHAM CITY!

--ONLY FOURTEEN PEOPLE WILL EVER KNOW IT'S HAPPENED!

AND THE REALLY CHARMING THING ABOUT IT IS--

TIME TO CHANGE FOR MY NEXT APPOINTMENT.

EYES FRONT, EVAN.

YES, MA'AM!

NIGHT, ON THE GOTHAM WATERFRONT...

AN INFORMER TOLD ME ABOUT A SMUGGLING DROP DUE TO TAKE PLACE HERE TONIGHT.

IT'S NOT THE MAJOR CRIME I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR--

--BUT I'VE LEARNED NEVER TO LOOK AWAY FROM ANY POTENTIAL RIP-OFF.

THIS COULD LEAD TO-- EH?

THE BELL TOWER AT TRINITY CHURCH-- CHIMING EIGHT O'CLOCK!

BONG! BONG!

AS THE LAST CHIME SOUNDS, A STRANGE TRANSFORMATION COMES OVER THE DARKNIGHT DETECTIVE; WITH SCARCELY A GLANCE TOWARD THE APPROACHING SMUGGLER'S MOTORBOAT, HE RISES INTO FULL VIEW...

UH-OH, BARNEY, WE GOT TROUBLE!

THE BATMAN!

L WAREHOUSE

HE MUST'A BEEN TIPPED OFF!

I'LL WASTE 'IM!

NOT SO FAST, BARNEY-- YOU WANT US NAILED FOR ATTEMPTED MURDER?

THE BATMAN'S TOO SMART TO MAKE TARGET WITHOUT SOME PLAN--!

HEY! WHAT GIVES? HE'S STEPPING RIGHT OFF THE BUILDING!

WE DON'T HAVE TO WASTE 'IM-- HE'S DOING THE JOB FOR US!

NOW HE'S WALKING OFF LIKE WE WEREN'T EVEN *HERE!*

MURPH, THE GUY AIN'T *HUMAN!*

WHAT SAY WE DROP OUR LOAD AND *TAIL* IT OUT OF HERE, HUH?

BARNEY, YOU WON'T GET ANY ARGUMENTS FROM *ME!*

NO, *LOOK!*

HE'S *SOMERSAULTING*--

--LANDING ON HIS *FEET* LIKE A *CAT!*

HE IS LIKE A SLEEPWALKER...

...STRIDING WITH MECHANICAL PURPOSE ALONG DARKENED SIDE-STREETS FROM THE WATERFRONT TO GOTHAM SQUARE, WHERE TOURISTS AND THEATERGOERS HALT TO GAPE AT THE STRANGE CLOAKED FIGURE WALKING THROUGH THEIR MIDST, CASTING LONG SHADOWS IN THE NEON GLOW...

BEIN' A "*DIP*" IN A TOWN LIKE *GOTHAM* IS A *CINCH!*

I MUST'VE PICKED *TWENTY POCKETS* TODAY, AND NOBODY'S EVEN NOTICE--*ULP!*

SPY S
STARRING
CHARD EMM

B-BATMAN!

M-MISTER, HERE'S YOUR *WALLET* BACK!

CALL A *COP*... I'VE GOT A *DOZEN MORE* ...AN' I WANNA TURN MYSELF IN!

I'LL *DO* THAT, YOUNG MAN!

OKAY, B-BATMAN ...Y'SEE? I *QUIT!* I WON'T STEAL NO WALLETS *NO MORE!*

MR CRAZY

B-BATMAN? *HEY!* HE DIDN'T EVEN *LOOK* AT ME!

AM I DREAMING, OR *WHAT?*

8

CONTINUED ON 2ND

ADVERT SEMENT

Wonder Woman™ VERSUS The ROBOT MASTER

HA, HA! WITH THESE FOUR ROBOT DUPLICATES OF MYSELF, NO ONE WILL FIND THE REAL ME!

WE WALK AND TALK ALIKE! WE'RE IDENTICAL IN EVERY WAY!

I'LL COMMIT THE CRIMES OF THE CENTURY!

NOT SO FAST, ROBOT MASTER! I'LL PUT YOU WHERE YOU BELONG -- BEHIND BARS!

WONDER WOMAN!

YOU CAN ONLY CATCH ONE OF US -- AND I'LL BET IT'S THE WRONG ONE!

OH? TRY CATCHING THESE!

HOSTESS® TWINKIES® CAKES!

THAT'S RIGHT!

I MUST TELL THE TRUTH... DELICIOUS, GOLDEN SPONGE CAKE! THE CREAMED FILLING! YUM!

YOU GAVE YOURSELF AWAY, ROBOT MASTER -- YOUR ROBOTS DON'T HAVE TO EAT!

TOO BAD FOR THEM -- THAT MEANS MORE TWINKIES CAKES FOR ME!

PERHAPS WE CAN BE RE-PROGRAMMED TO ENJOY HOSTESS TWINKIES CAKES TOO!

YOU GET A BIG DELIGHT IN EVERY BITE OF HOSTESS TWINKIES CAKES

ALL CHARACTERS DC COMICS INC 1981

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© 1981 CONTINENTAL BAKING COMPANY

ON HE WALKS, LEAVING THE NEON-LIT MAIN AVENUE TO TURN DOWN A CROSS-STREET...

THERE, AT LAST, HE HESITATES, SLOWING HIS STRIDE BY AN EFFORT OF WILL...

AMBASSADOR

...AND STARING AHEAD AT THE GROUP OF BEWILDERED-LOOKING MEN GATHERED UNDER A DARKENED THEATER MARQUEE...

HE KNOWS THESE MEN; ONLY A FEW HOURS EARLIER, THEY SAT WITH HIM AROUND A CONFERENCE TABLE IN THE WAYNE FOUNDATION BOARD ROOM...

MUSTN'T...LET THEM SEE ME... DRESSED LIKE *THIS*!

ONLY CONNECTION... BETWEEN US ALL...IS WAYNE FOUNDATION...!

STAGE DOOR

BY PROCESS... OF *ELIMINATION* ...THEY WOULD GUESS... I'M WAYNE!

UNNH... TERRIBLE *COMPULSION* TO JOIN THEM!

BUT I MUST *FIGHT* IT...EVEN THOUGH EVERY *IMPULSE* DRIVES ME TOWARD THEATER *ENTRANCE*!

AHHHHHH

DON'T KNOW WHAT'S *HAPPENED* TO ME--FEEL LIKE A *ZOMBIE*!

THE *COMPULSION* THAT BROUGHT ME HERE IS *IRRESISTIBLE*!

HAVE TO CHANGE *CLOTHES*... *QUICKLY*!

A MOMENT LATER...

LOOK, THERE'S *WAYNE*! WHATEVER FORCED ALL OF *US* TO COME HERE MUST HAVE AFFECTED HIM, *TOO*!

WHAT'S GOING *ON*, BRUCE?

ENDICOTT, I'M IN THE DARK AS MUCH AS *YOU* ARE.

I WAS OUT *JOGGING* WHEN SUDDENLY--I *HAD* TO COME TO THIS THEATER!

I WAS HAVING *DINNER*!

AND *I* WAS HALF-WAY ACROSS THE BRIDGE TO *NEW JERSEY*!

OBVIOUSLY, EACH OF US WAS AFFECTED IN THE *SAME WAY.*

BUT *HOW*-- AND *WHY?*

IF YOU WANT ANSWERS, GENTLEMEN, STEP INSIDE!

THE THEATER DOOR'S *OPENING*--BY *ITSELF!*

... I WON'T BITE YOU-- *TWICE!*

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SIGN THIS LITTLE PIECE OF *PAPER*, AND YOU CAN GO *HOME* WITHOUT A FUSS.

AND NONE BUT *US* WILL BE THE *WISER!*

POISON IVY!

IF SOMEONE'S TRYING TO *SPOOK* US, HE'S DOING A *GOOD JOB!*

THAT WAS A *WOMAN'S VOICE* WE HEARD JUST NOW!

YES-- AND STRANGELY *FAMILIAR!*

STEP UP TO THE STAGE, BOYS! DON'T BE SHY...

YOU RECOGNIZE ME, MISTER WAYNE -- BUT YOU *DIDN'T* THIS AFTERNOON WHEN WE MET AT THE *EMPIRE CLUB!*

NONE OF YOU RECOGNIZED ME, WHEN I APPROACHED EACH OF YOU TODAY-- AND "ACCIDENTALLY" *KISSED* YOU --WHILE I WAS WEARING *THIS!*

I CALL IT "*OUR SECRET*"...

...AND IT *IS* OUR LITTLE SECRET, ISN'T IT, DARLING?

YOU KNOW WHAT THEY *SAY* ABOUT *POISON IVY*, DON'T YOU MY SWEETS?

"ONCE YOU'VE BEEN TOUCHED BY POISON IVY, YOU CAN NEVER GET RID OF HER!"

NEVER, NEVER, NEVER!

MY GOD, IT'S HER *LIPSTICK!* SOME KIND OF *HYPNOTIC AGENT*--A *DRUG*--MIXED INTO HER *LIPSTICK!*

I GAVE EACH OF YOU A SUBLIMINAL *SUGGESTION* TO JOIN US HERE TONIGHT--

--AND NOW I'M *COMMANDING* YOU TO SIGN THIS *DOCUMENT.*

DON'T *DO* IT, COREY! THAT'S SOME KIND OF *LEGAL PAPER...*

I'M TRYING TO *RESIST*-- BUT THE COMPULSION TO *COMPLY*--IS *OVERWHELMING!*

WHAT ARE WE *SIGNING,* YOU WITCH?

OH, NOTHING MUCH, *REALLY.*

JUST A SIMPLE *ASSIGNMENT* OF *ASSETS!*

ASSETS-- OF *WHAT?*

OF THE *WAYNE FOUNDATION,* NATURALLY.

WHEN YOU'RE ALL *FINISHED* SIGNING THAT PAPER--THE FOUNDATION WILL BELONG TO *ME!*

AND JUST IN CASE *YOU'RE* OF A MIND TO *DEFY* ME, MR. WAYNE...

...I'M GOING TO *DOUBLY REINFORCE* MY HYPNOTIC HOLD ON YOUR WILL!

MMMMM.

SOME DUTIES ARE *MORE* PLEASANT THAN OTHERS.

SIGN THE *PAPER,* MR. WAYNE.

I...DON'T HAVE ANY OTHER *CHOICE.*

OH, I KNOW. I *KNOW.*

YOU'LL DON'T THINK YOU'LL *GET AWAY* WITH THIS, DO YOU, WOMAN?

THAT DOCUMENT WILL BE DECLARED *INVALID* AS SOON AS WE TELL HOW YOU *COERCED* US INTO SIGNING IT!

THERE ISN'T A COURT IN THE *COUNTRY* THAT'LL *UPHOLD* IT--

TRUE...

IF YOU TOLD WHAT HAPPENED HERE TONIGHT, BUT YOU *WON'T.*

I COMMAND YOU TO KEEP THIS "*OUR SECRET*"... AND YOU WILL, *FOREVER!*

EVEN *TRY* TO TELL SOMEONE ABOUT OUR ARRANGEMENT--

--AND THE WORDS WILL *CHOKE IN YOUR THROAT!*

NOW *LEAVE.*

I'LL BE IN *TOUCH* ABOUT COLLECTING MY *MILLIONS*... SOMEDAY *SOON!*

TWELVE MEN LEAVE... BUT ONE MAN RETURNS...

SHE'S STILL HERE, *GLOATING*. I CAN'T *BLAME* HER... WHAT SHE'S ACCOMPLISHED IS *STAGGERING!*

WITH THAT DOCUMENT, SHE CAN *LOOT* THE WAYNE FOUNDATION AT *WILL*--AND LEGALLY, I'D BE HELPLESS TO *STOP HER!*

THAT'S WHY I CAN'T LET HER *KEEP* THAT PAPER!

BOXES 1&2

BRUCE WAYNE IS IN DEEP TROUBLE--

--AND IT'S UP TO *THE BATMAN* TO PULL WAYNE'S FAT OUT OF THE *FIRE!*

LUCKILY, IVY DOESN'T KNOW THAT *THE BATMAN* IS ALSO UNDER HER *"SPELL"*--

OTHERWISE, THIS FIGHT WOULD BE *OVER* BEFORE IT COULD *BEGIN!*

SUDDENLY, ON THE STAGE BELOW, THE WOMAN KNOWN AS POISON IVY COCKS HER HEAD, TURNING --AN EYEBROW LIFTING AS SHE GLANCES TOWARD THE SHADOWED PRIVATE BOXES ABOVE...

EVAN! I SWEAR I JUST *HEARD* SOMETHING FROM ONE OF THE *BOXES* OVERLOOKING *STAGE LEFT!*

HIT THE SPOTS!

IN THE CONTROL BOOTH AT THE REAR OF THE THEATER--

--EVAN, THE SOMETIME TAXI DRIVER, COMPLIES:

A BEAM OF BRIGHT BLUE LIGHT THRUSTS THE DARKNESS ASIDE--

M'STRESS, LOOK OUT! IT'S--

THE BATMAN!

CONTINUED ON PAGE FOLLOWING

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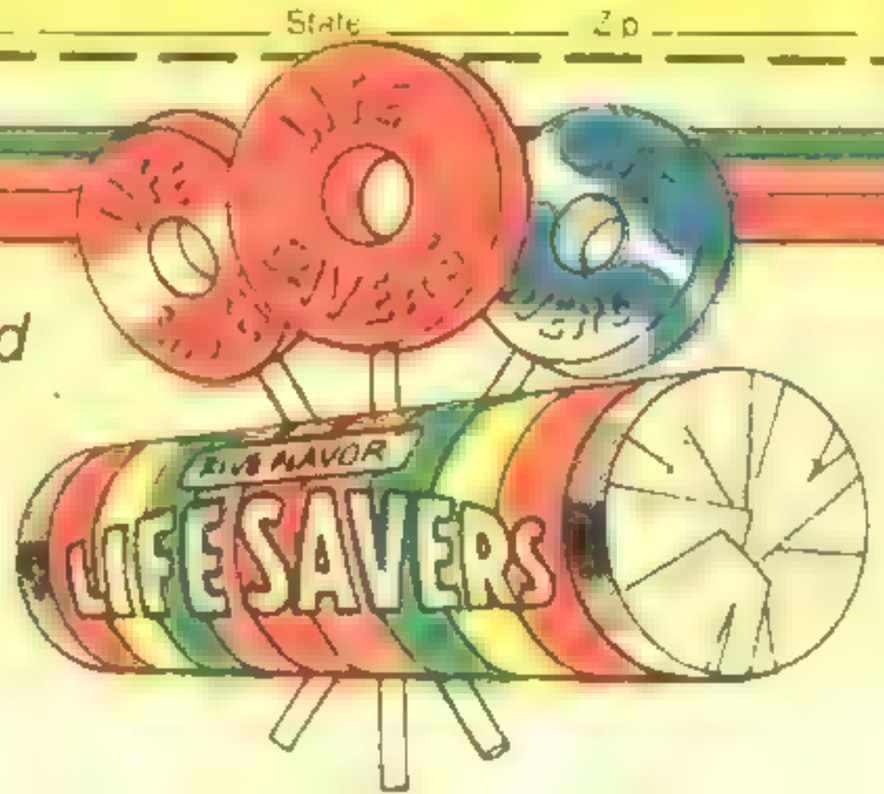

I CAN'T SAY THIS IS A *PLEASANT* SURPRISE, BATMAN--

--BUT IT ISN'T WHOLLY *UNEXPECTED!*

I THOUGHT WE MIGHT MEET AGAIN, SO I CAME PREPARED--WITH *POISON THORN DARTS!*

IVY IS AS CLEVER AND AS DEADLY AS *EVER!*

TWISTING IN MID-AIR TO AVOID THOSE DARTS--BUT I'M LOSING MY *BALANCE--!*

BAD LANDING, BATMAN?

I HOPE YOU HAVEN'T *HURT* YOURSELF --NOT *MUCH,* I MEAN.

SNIK!

UHHH-- SPRAINED MY *ANKLE!*

YOU KNOW, *DARLING,* THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I WAS QUITE *INFATUATED* WITH YOU.*

I THOUGHT WE'D MAKE A *DELICIOUS* COUPLE.

YOU DISAGREED...

*IVY FIRST APPEARED IN BATMAN #181.--D.

". . AND EVER SINCE THEN, I THINK I'VE DESPISED YOU, JUST A LITTLE."

IVY... THIS *VINE...* IS *CHOKING ME!*

YOU REALLY *DO* DESERVE TO DIE...

...BUT I'VE NEVER KILLED ANYONE *YET*, AND I DON'T PLAN TO START *NOW*.

GIVE US A *KISS*, BATMAN, AND I'LL TAKE THE NASTY VINES AWAY.

NO?

THEN, TO HADES WITH *YOU*, BATMAN.

I'M NOT THE *CLINGING* TYPE. I KNOW WHEN I'M NOT *WANTED*.

GET RID OF THAT *CHOKER* YOURSELF--

...IF YOU CAN!

HA HA HA HA

SCRAT

CAN'T *BREATHE*... *BLACKING OUT!*

HAVE TO ACT *NOW*...

...OR I'LL *NEVER* GET *ANOTHER* CHANCE!

SSSSTT

DEFOLIANT FROM *UTILITY BELT*... KILLING *VINE!*

BUT WILL IT WORK-- BEFORE *VINE* KILLS *ME?*

AHHHH... FEEL LIKE I'VE JUST BEEN *HANGED!*

BUT I'M *ALIVE*... AND *FREE*--

--AND "*FREE*" IS MORE THAN *POISON IVY* IS GOING TO BE, ONCE I CLOSE IN ON HER!

WHAT?

THE STAGE IS *EMPTY!?*

NO SIGN OF *IVY* OR HER ACCOMPLICE IN THE *CONTROL BOOTH*--

--EXCEPT FOR THAT *OPEN DOOR!*

I DON'T KNOW WHY I'M *RUNNING!*

IN MY HEART, I'VE GOT A *SICK FEELING*...

SHE'S PLAYING FOR *HIGH STAKES*... THE ENTIRE *WAYNE FOUNDATION!*

SHE ISN'T *ABOUT* TO MAKE A STUPID ERROR THAT *MIGHT* LEAD ME TO HER NOW!

...THAT I'M *TOO LATE!*

IVY IS *GONE*... AND IT'S A SAFE BET SHE'S COVERED HER *TRACKS!*

...AND WHEN DAWN LIGHTENS THE SKY OVER THE WAYNE BUILDING...

...HE RETURNS TO THE BATCAVE BENEATH, A GRIM BUT UNDISCOURAGED MAN SEEKING PSYCHIC REFUGE...

I HAD TO RETRIEVE THE BATMOBILE FROM WHERE I'D LEFT IT ON THE WATERFRONT.

FINDING THAT SMUGGLERS' BOAT AND CARGO ABANDONED WAS AN UNEXPECTED BONUS.

THE SMUGGLERS MUST HAVE SEEN ME--AND FLED, THINKING I WAS ABOUT TO CAPTURE THEM!

SOMETIMES MY REPUTATION SURPRISES EVEN ME.

I BETTER CALL COMMISSIONER GORDON -- TELL HIM WHAT HAPPENED.

JIM GORDON IS AN EARLY RISER--I'LL USE THE HOTLINE TO REACH HIM AT HOME.

COMMISSIONER? THIS IS THE BATMAN.

I'VE GOT A PRESENT FOR YOU.

BUT THEN...

SOMETHING ELSE OCCURRED TONIGHT, COMMISSIONER.

IT INVOLVES P--ARRRKK!

THE WORDS ARE CHOKING IN MY THROAT!

IT'S THE HYPNOTIC DRUG--IT'S PREVENTING ME FROM TELLING GORDON WHAT HAPPENED WITH POISON IVY AND THE WAYNE FOUNDATION!

BUT--IF I CAN'T TELL GORDON--HOW CAN I STOP HER?

MY GOD! CAN I STOP HER?

ONLY TIME WILL TELL, BATMAN! ONLY TIME WILL TELL!

NEXT: THE MOLE!

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MY NAME IS DICK GRAYSON, BUT EVERYONE KNOWS ME BY ANOTHER NAME AS THE BATMAN'S SIDEKICK, THE EX-BOY WONDER CALLED **ROBIN.**

BEFORE I WAS ROBIN, I WAS ALSO A BOY WONDER--A KID CALLED DICK, OF THE FLYING GRAYSONS.

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starring the Flying Graysons

HALEY CIRCUS

the Flying Graysons

featuring DICK the BOY WONDER

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HILL CIRCUS PRESENTS THE TRAPEZE SENSATION

DICK GRAYSON OF THE FLYING GRAYSONS IN A SPECIAL GUEST APPEARANCE

YESERDAY'S HEROES!

GERRY CONWAY WRITER
IRV NOVICK & BRUCE PATTERSON ARTISTS

JOHN COSTANZA : letterer
ADRIENNE ROY : colorist

DICK GIORDANO: EDITOR

FACE IT; THERE AREN'T MANY REAL CIRCUSES LEFT THESE DAYS.

CIRCUS VARGAS... BAILY BROTHERS... AND OF COURSE, THE HILL CIRCUS.

HILL CIRCUS

DON'T MISS the Sensational DICK GRAYSON ON THE FLYING TRAPEZE

TICKE

YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN BY A "REAL" CIRCUS--THE KIND WITH TENTS SET UP IN THE OPEN AIR, INSTEAD OF IN SOME CIVIC AUDITORIUM.

LORNA HILL RUNS THIS SHOW; SHE'S THE LATEST IN A LONG LINE OF CIRCUS FOLK--AND CIRCUS FOLK ARE GOOD PEOPLE, NOT LIKE YOUR CARNY CROWD...

HILL CIRCUS presents the TRIPLE SOMERSAULT

DICK GRAYSON

AT THE HILL CIRCUS, THE BIG ATTRACTION IS CLEVELAND BRAND, BROTHER OF BOSTON BRAND, THE ORIGINAL DEADMAN...

THEY'RE PLAYIN' THE *TUNE*, LORNA.

CLEVE SPRAINED HIS ARM A FEW DAYS AGO... WHICH IS WHERE I COME IN...

TIME FOR THE *KID* TO SHOW HIS STUFF.

YOU COMIN'?

I WOULDN'T MISS IT!

CLEVE'S SPRAIN GAVE ME MY CHANCE.

I'VE BEEN HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT MY CAREER AS ROBIN, AND PARTICULARLY MY RELATIONSHIP WITH BATMAN.

LAAAADIES AND GENTLEMEN, AND CHILDREN OF ALLLL AGES!

PRESENTING, FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT AND EDIFICAAATION...

WHEN MY OLD FRIEND, WALDO THE CLOWN, WROTE TO TELL ME THERE WAS A JOB AT THE CIRCUS, I JUMPED AT THE OPPORTUNITY...

...OUR NEWEST AERIAL SENSATION...

I WANTED TO KNOW IF I COULD MAKE IT AS MYSELF, WITHOUT ROBIN...

...DICK GRAYSON, OF THE FLYING GRAYSONS!

THAT'S WHY I WAS HERE, AT THE CIRCUS.

I NEEDED TO FIND MY ROOTS... TO GO BACK TO MY BEGINNINGS...

THIS BRAVE YOUNG MAN WILL ATTEMPT THE DEATH-DEFYING *TRIPLE FLIP*...

...AND IF THAT MEANT REJECTING ROBIN AND EVERYTHING THAT I'D BECOME SINCE I LEFT THE CIRCUS YEARS AGO...

...A STUNT THAT IS THE MOST *DANGEROUS* KNOWN TO THE AERIALIST'S ART...

...THEN THAT'S WHAT I WOULD DO.

...AND HE WILL PERFORM THIS DARING *TRIPLE FLIP*...

I HAD TO KNOW: COULD I MAKE IT AS DICK GRAYSON, WITHOUT ROBIN OR THE BATMAN?

...WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF A *NET!*

IN A WAY, I GUESS, WHAT I WAS DOING WITH MY LIFE WAS JUST LIKE WHAT I WAS DOING ON THE TRAPEZE...

I WAS RISKING MY LIFE WITHOUT A NET.

I'D BROKEN OFF WITH BRUCE WAYNE--THE BATMAN--AND I'D LEFT THE COMFORT AND SECURITY OF COLLEGE LIFE AT HUDSON UNIVERSITY.

I WAS FLYING HIGH, WITHOUT A NET.

ONLY LITTLE KIDS NEED NETS.

1

ONLY LITTLE KIDS...

3

CAREFUL, RICHARD...

RICHARD, I SAID-- BE CAREFUL!

WHUPS!

S-SORRY, DAD!

UM-HMM.

GUESS I REACHED TOO FAR!

SOMEDAY YOU'RE GOING TO BE PERFORMING THAT STUNT *WITHOUT* A NET, RICHARD.

IF YOU *CONTINUE* TO OVER-REACH...

...WE'LL HAVE TO FIND *ANOTHER* PARTNER FOR *THE FLYING GRAYSONS*, BECAUSE YOU, MY LAD, ARE GOING TO BE *SPLATTERED* ALL OVER THE *CENTER RING!*

NEVER REACH TOO FAR, DICK!

B-BUT, DAD...

...YOU ALWAYS SAID... WE'VE *GOTTA* KEEP REACHING... 'CAUSE THAT'S THE ONLY WAY WE CAN *GROW!*

LOOKS LIKE I MADE A *MESS* OF THINGS, MARY!

WHAT YOUR FATHER MEANT WAS ONLY THAT YOU SHOULD MAKE ABSOLUTELY *SURE* OF YOUR ABILITIES, RICHARD!

KEEP REACHING...

...BUT WHEN YOU REACH, *KNOW* WHAT YOU'RE REACHING FOR!

BE *SURE* OF YOURSELF-- AND YOU CAN *NEVER* REACH TOO FAR!

LISTEN TO YOUR MOTHER, RICHARD.

SHE KNOWS WHAT I MEAN-- EVEN IF I DON'T!

DAD WAS RIGHT... HE TAUGHT ME TO BE CAREFUL, TO KNOW MY LIMITATIONS AND NEVER OVER-REACH MYSELF...

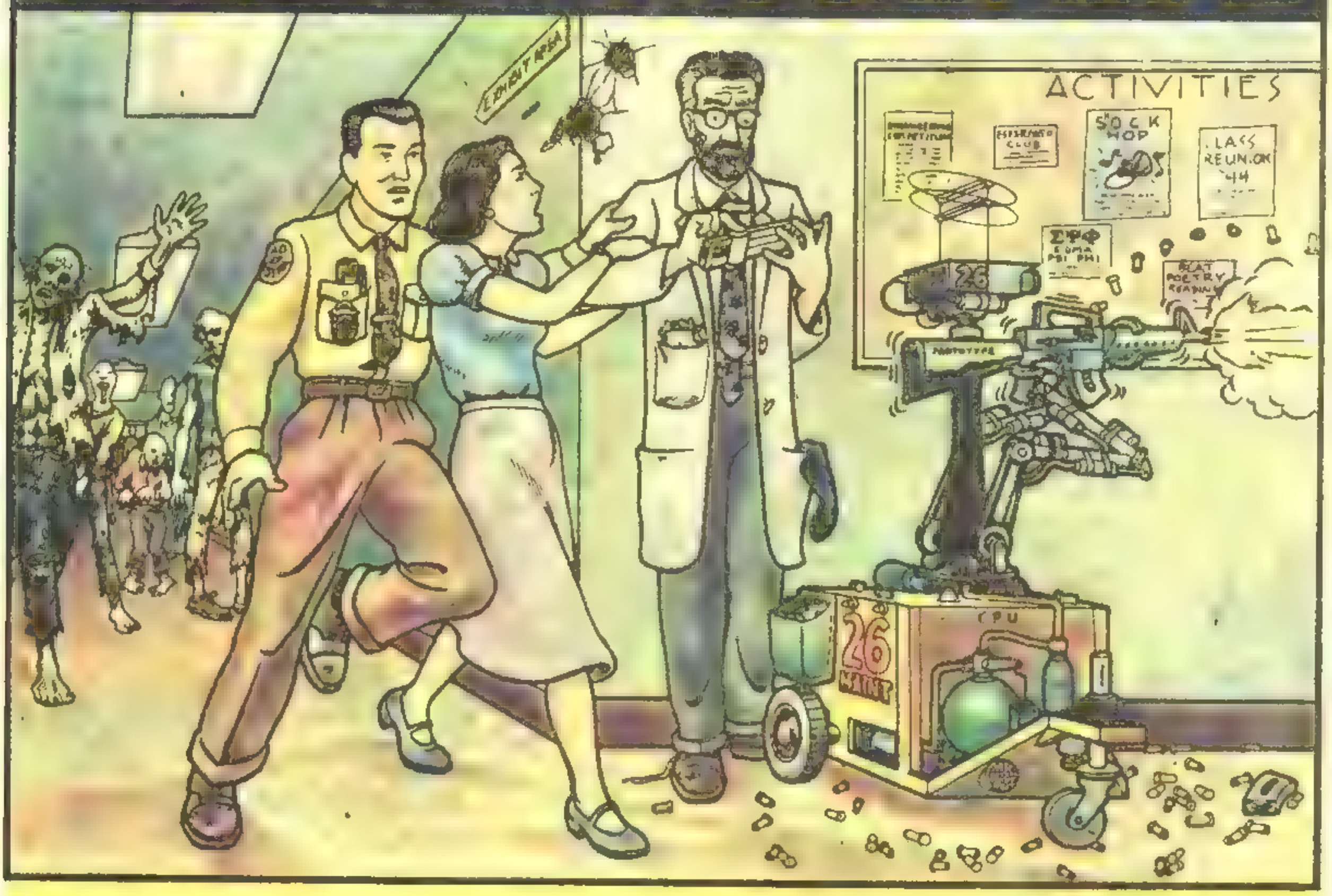
...AND MOM TAUGHT ME TO KEEP ON TRYING TO EXTEND MY REACH, BY LEARNING ABOUT MYSELF... MY SKILLS... MY POTENTIAL.

THEY MADE IT SAFE FOR ME TO WORK WITHOUT A NET...

4

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

YOU ARE EARTH'S ONLY HOPE!



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THAT WAS THE LAST SOUND OF APPLAUSE MY PARENTS EVER HEARD.

SNAP!

JOHN!

I DIDN'T KNOW THEN THAT I WOULD ONE DAY TRACK DOWN THE MAN WHO KILLED MY PARENTS...

I DIDN'T KNOW THEN THAT MY PLIGHT HAD ATTRACTED THE ATTENTION OF SOMEONE WHO HAD LOST HIS OWN PARENTS TO CRIME...

PERHAPS, IN ME, HE SAW HIMSELF AS A CHILD -- ORPHANED BY VIOLENCE, EMBARKING ON A LIFELONG CRUSADE FOR VENGEANCE...

ACID HAD CUT THROUGH THE ROPES ON MY PARENTS' TRAPEZE...

LET ME THROUGH! THEY'RE NOT...

I'M AFRAID SO, SON!

THEY WERE VICTIMS OF A PROTECTION RACKET WHOSE BOSS WAS TRYING TO EXTORT MONEY FROM THE CIRCUS OWNERS...

...WITHOUT A NET...

I WAS IN MID-AIR NOW, STARTING MY FIRST FLIP.

THE DRUMROLL SOUNDED LIKE A FAST HEARTBEAT...

...REMINDING ME OF TWO OTHER HEARTS THAT HAD STOPPED BEATING, LONG AGO...

NICE GOING, DEAR!

LET'S GIVE THE FLYING GRAYSONS A BIG HAND, FOLKS!

CLAP CLAP CLAP

IF THAT'S TRUE, HE WAS WRONG.

HE MAY HAVE WANTED ME TO GROW UP TO BE LIKE HIM, LIKE THE BATMAN...

...BUT I DIDN'T.

I'M NOT OBSESSED WITH CRIME THE WAY HE IS.

HE GREW UP WITHOUT REAL PARENTS-- BUT I DIDN'T-- I ALWAYS HAD HIM!

HE BECAME MY FATHER...FROM THAT VERY FIRST DAY, WHEN HE BROUGHT ME TO THE BATCAVE...AND REVEALED HIS SECRET IDENTITY!

STRETCHING FOR THE BAR, I COULD HEAR MY FATHER TELLING ME TO KNOW MY LIMITATIONS...

...AND I HEARD ANOTHER VOICE, JOINING THAT OF MY MOTHER...

YOU HAVE TO KNOW YOURSELF, DICK.

I'M GOING TO TRAIN YOU TO BE A CRIME-FIGHTER, IT'S GOING TO STRETCH YOUR ABILITIES TO THEIR FULLEST POTENTIAL!

IT WAS AS THOUGH MY MOTHER WERE THERE, IN THE BATCAVE, ENCOURAGING ME... PRAISING ME... CHIDING ME...

I WANTED TO DO BETTER, TO PLEASE HER-- AND TO PLEASE THE BATMAN, WHO WAS GIVING ME A CHANCE TO CATCH MY PARENTS' KILLERS.

AND AT THE SAME TIME, MY FATHER WAS THERE, AS WELL...

...WARNING ME TO BE CAREFUL, NOT TO OVER-REACH MYSELF...AND YET, ALWAYS TO DO MY BEST!

THESE LAST FEW WEEKS HAVE BEEN CRUCIAL, DICK.

YOU'VE LEARNED EVERYTHING I COULD TEACH YOU.

NOW IT'S TIME FOR THE ROBIN TO FLY!

WE CAUGHT MY PARENTS' KILLER...

...AND WE WENT ON TO BECOME A TEAM...

...FIGHTING TOGETHER TO DEFEAT A FACE-LESS ENEMY THAT SEEMED TO BE EVERYWHERE.

AND IN THE END...

...WE STARTED FIGHTING BETWEEN OURSELVES.

DICK--YOU'RE NOT LEAVING?

I HAVE TO, BRUCE. I NEED TIME TO THINK.

I'LL BE IN--

--TOUCH!

CAN'T TOUCH THE TRAPEZE BAR! I REACHED TOO FAR!

AND THIS TIME--

--I'M FALLING WITHOUT A NET!

SUDDENLY...THE WORLD SEEMED TO SLOW DOWN AND STOP.

INSTEAD OF FALLING, I WAS DRIFTING--- AND I REALIZED THAT HE WAS THERE.

NOT PHYSICALLY, NOT PSYCHICALLY...

...BUT IN A STRANGE, ALMOST SPIRITUAL SENSE.

AND HE WASN'T ALONE.

I BECAME VERY CALM. AND I KNEW EXACTLY WHAT TO DO.

WILL YOU LOOK AT THAT?

HE CAUGHT ONE OF THE TENT ROPES--

--AND HE'S SPINNING DOWN IT LIKE A WHIRLI-GIG!

WHAT A PERFORMER!

I COULD HAVE TOLD THEM IT WASN'T AN ACT.

A SECOND AGO, I WAS AS CLOSE TO DYING AS I EVER WANT TO GET.

SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED TO ME, IN THAT INSTANT...

...AND AS THE CIRCUS CROWD BURST INTO WAVES OF THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE, I THOUGHT I KNEW WHAT IT WAS THAT HAD COME OVER ME...

CLAP

I'D BEEN LOOKING FOR MY ROOTS-- TRYING TO FIND MYSELF BY RETURNING TO MY PAST, SEARCHING FOR YESTERDAY'S HEROES...

CLAP CLAP

THOSE HEROES, I NOW KNOW, ARE NOT IN THE PAST-- THEY ARE IN THE PRESENT-- AND THEY ARE PART OF ME!

I AM DICK GRAYSON, WHO IS THE SON OF THE FLYING GRAYSONS... AND THE WARD OF THE BATMAN.

THEY HAD MADE ME WHAT I AM...

...BUT I AM MORE THAN WHAT EACH OF THEM HAD WANTED ME TO BE:

I AM MYSELF!

The End

8

L-837

Dear Paul:

Concerning Batman #334, or perhaps more importantly, the Diary of Al Talmun. I take it that there was such a historian, and this is not a creation of your staff? By using the quotations of a 17th century man, Marv has succeeded in adding to the already awesome legend of Ra's Al Ghul, "the Demon's Head". Ra's immortal status has always been something that puzzled the reader. We know he could die, then be resurrected by the famed Lazarus Pit. Yet Talia, or so I assumed anyways, was always thought of as being totally mortal. Ra's, I thought, would never let the curse of immortality and power touch his beloved child. I don't know why, but I always figured that Ra's would take someone as his bride every fifty years or so, and then go out with his plans of conquest with the offspring of that marriage. To say the least, it disturbed me that Talia was shown as an immortal who requires a mystic potion or such. Because of this, any hopes of her and Batman being truly intimate have been put to waste. For Batman could never become involved with someone who requires a narcotic, not to mention is at least six times as old as he. If it were up to me, I'd show that all of this involving Talia was only a trick by Ra's to win Batman over.

The story itself was very good. So far each part of this four parter has been a story on its own, not just a continuation of the original tale. Very well done on your parts.

Novick and McLaughlin have done extremely well on the artwork, handling each chapter with a different mood or flavour as it required.

Some thoughts and questions on my behalf: Was the Roy Thomas who became one of the more famous JSA fans this same one whose work has appeared in comics for so long? When will Robin's solo strip begin? Who will be assigned the writing and artistic chores? Finally, something I've noticed, why has there been an over-abundance of bondage covers on Batman? As was pointed out to me a month ago, the number of these covers to appear has been steadily increased year by year since about 1976. A few I don't mind, but when it gets to the point when you wonder if the creators of these comix are sadomasochists, I begin to get disturbed. Maybe you've just never noticed the frequency with which they're appearing, so I thought I'd let you know, no more chains for awhile, OK?

Dave Lauder
Kingston, Ont. Canada

Al Talmun was created by Marv...and a neat touch, too, if you ask me.

As for Talia...she is made immortal by her father's touch, not *a mystic potion and since Ra's Al Ghul is gone forever (?), Talia is now mortal.*

Quick answers to your other questions: 1 - JSA fan Thomas and pro writer Thomas are one and the same. 2 - Robin's solo strip begins with issue #337. Gerry Conway scripts; Don Newton and Irv Novik will share the drawing assignments. 3 - I hadn't noticed the over-use of "chained" covers. After checking...I still *didn't consider it overdone! It* was *a few...and I'm glad you don't mind!*

This might be a good time to mention to all you letter writers out there that your letter is more likely to be considered for inclusion in this column if: A) it is typed or printed *legibly B) it is reasonably brief and C) a specific point is made or a question raised. Obviously, we can't print all your letters even if you follow these tips, but it would help.*

Thank you and good afternoon -- DG

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